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Carolling around the campfire

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Christmas gift for the birds: Joan Horlings helps granddaughter Saliah, 5, make a pine cone birdfeeder at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area north of Bradford on Dec. 10. See more on Page 2.

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MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Musicians lead the carolling around the campfire at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area.

Carolling around the campfire

CONTINUED FROM > PAGE 1

STAFF

There was carolling around the campfire at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area on Saturday night, with fresh, crisp snow underfoot and an "owl moon" riding in a starlit sky.

The annual event, a fund-raiser organized by the volunteer group Friends of Scanlon Creek, brought scores of families to the park, located north of Bradford. The evening included an opportunity to identify feathers, pelts and skulls at the nature table, make a pine cone birdfeeder to take home, and enjoy hot chocolate and a candlelit walk in the night-time woods.

Sitting around the bonfire, naturalist Peter Wukasch told "owl tales," describing the flight, habits and calls of Ontario's owls, before musicians on guitar and mandolin led the singing – all part of a beautiful holiday tradition in nature.

New name for the SEAR

MIRIAM KING
Bradford Times

It's always been referred to as the "SEAR" – the Southeast Arterial Road.

It's the southeast portion of a ring road, gradually being constructed around Bradford by the municipality, that will connect Holland Street East/Bridge Street with Simcoe Road – diverting traffic from Holland and the downtown core.

Now that paving is complete and the road is nearly ready to open, town council has several steps to take. One is to authorize the closure of Morris Road, from Centre Street to the new SEAR – renaming the northern portion of the roadway Anne Street.

The other: coming up with a new name for the SEAR.

Coun. Gary Lamb suggested "Letitia Parkway or Letitia Boulevard because it recognizes a historical person" – Letitia Magee, one of the first settlers in Bradford in the 1830s. Coming to Upper Canada with her brothers, Charles and James, Magee was an early land developer and speculator in Bradford, from 1837 to 1849, laying out the 38 original lots that became the town of Bradford.

A portion of Frederick St. was once called "Letitia," but currently "we do not have a street named after her," noted Mayor Rob Keffer, supporting the suggestion.

"I would support that in a heartbeat," agreed Coun. Mark Contois. "She was ahead of her time."

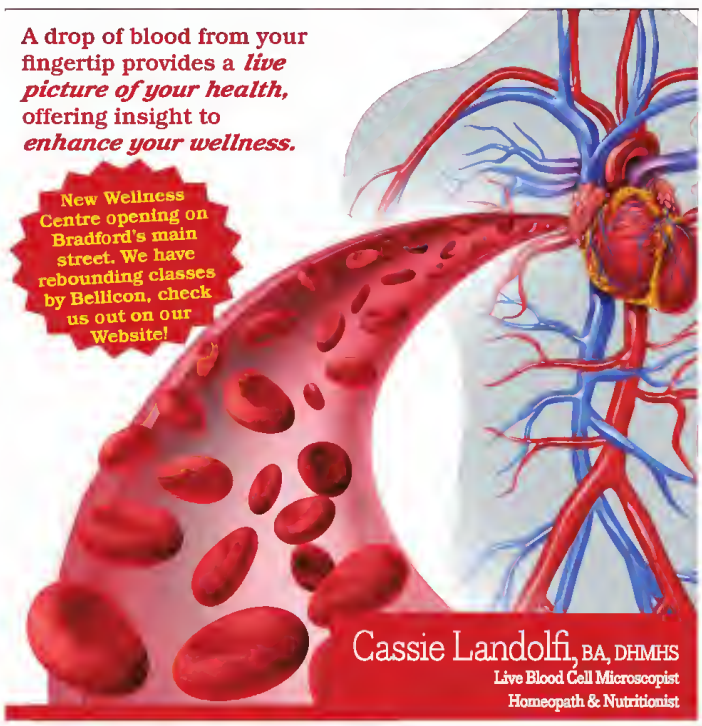
But Coun. Peter Dykie Jr. proposed Marsh Boulevard or Avenue as an alternative, to recognize the engineering feat of building on marshland. "I never thought that could actually get done," he said, calling it "one of the most creative roads in Ontario, cutting through the (Holland) marsh."

"I like the one Marsh View," said Coun. Gary Baynes. "There's quite a majestic lookout to the south."

The names Letitia Parkway and Marsh View Boulevard were referred to staff for review and a report at the next meeting of council.

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Looking south through the construction fence, toward the new South East Arterial Road in Bradford.



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BWG council briefs

Budget approved

In its Dec. 6 meeting, Bradford West Gwillimbury council approved the changes made to the 2017 municipal budgets during debate in November. "We checked into every department's budget lines and found some savings. As well, we were able to put some money forward for trees and sidewalks," said Mayor Rob Keffer.

High-speed Internet

The Town of BWG has signed an agreement with Vianet to permit the installation of a fibre cabinet beside the Bob Fallis Centre – effectively making high-speed Internet available within a 15-km radius, a radius that includes both the Reagens Industrial Park and the new employment land at Highway 400 and County Road 88.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for us," said Deputy Mayor James Leduc.

"It's a positive for the whole community," agreed Coun. Mark Contois.

Fire service as infrastructure

On Dec. 6, Bradford West Gwillimbury council voted to support a resolution of the Township of McKellar that fire services be classified as "critical infrastructure" – making fire services eligible for additional provincial funding through the Infrastructure Strategy to Move Ontario Forward. The Town of BWG is currently looking at constructing a new fire station in Bradford, and in future, a new station in the hamlet of Bond Head.

Leduc recommended supporting the resolution, asking the province to offset the rising costs of fire protection. "The Liberal government has not done that," Leduc said. "The provincial government (has) to come up and start paying some of the costs."

Contois agreed, "It's just a heavy burden for any municipality to bear. The province needs to step up to the plate."

Provide a warmer winter

South Simcoe Police are again collecting new and gently used winter coats to give to needy families, to ensure everyone has "A Warmer Winter." Outgrown and no-longer-needed children's winter coats and other winter wear and adult coats can be dropped off at either the North or South Division, where donation boxes will be placed inside the front doors. Officers will collect the coats and make sure they are distributed to those in need.

South Division, 81 Melbourne Dr. in Bradford, is open Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. to accept donations. North Division, 2137 Innisfil Beach Rd., is open for donations seven days a week, 24 hours a day. The collection of winter coats will continue all season.

Leo Club bottle drive

The new Bradford Leo Club, a youth service organization for ages 12 to 18, will hold its first fundraiser on Dec. 17 – a bottle drive that will provide seed money for the group's planned community event, a Valentine's Day dance for teens and tweens. The Leos will be going door to door, asking for donations.

Merry Christmas & Happy Holidays

to you and your family!

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Opinion

The Bradford Times

John Hammill, Regional Advertising Director
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Miriam King, Editor: Ext. 512223
mking@postmedia.com

Point of View

Paying the cost

The province of Ontario has it backward.

It permits development charges to be levied on new development, to pay for growth-related municipal infrastructure – water, sewers, roads, with some funding for recreation, libraries, policing and fire.

But the province then says 10% of the growth-related costs should be deemed as "benefit to existing" – providing improved services for the municipality's existing residents, and therefore payable out of taxes.

In fact, development charges don't even pay for growth. Rather than getting a 10% "benefit to existing" discount, perhaps developers should be billed an extra 10% over and above the development charges to account for additional wear-and-tear on the existing infrastructure and facilities, already paid for by residents – and another 10% surcharge to cover increased operating costs when the municipality has to add kilometres of roads, water mains, sewage lines and pumping stations, build a new fire station or a new arena.

Now, the province has introduced "asset management," requiring municipalities to build up reserves to pay for the eventual maintenance and replacement of existing infrastructure. Many – Bradford West Gwillimbury included – are adding a 1% capital levy to the property tax bill each year in an effort to build reserve funds, or at least catch up with repairs.

It's another burden on residents, and again, maybe there needs to be an additional 1% levy on development to cover the costs when the streets start to buckle and the sewer lines need replacing. Or maybe the province needs to stop downloading programs and costs, start finding efficiencies and provide municipalities with more funding.

Or at least just stop wasting taxpayers' dollars.

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Letters to the Editor

SUBMITTED

From left, Jenny DiPietri, Angela Bava, Stephanie Irwin, Liz Gorzo and chair Anna Cocco of the Bradford Mom2Mom Sale committee present a donation to Jodi Greenstreet of A Hand Up clothing room, as a helper looks on.

Mom2Mom fundraiser

To the editor: On behalf of the Bradford Mom2Mom Sale committee, we would like to extend our thanks to all those who made our re-launch 2016 fall sale such a huge success.

On Oc. 23, our committee was excited to raise $1,479 for the Hand Up Christmas Wish in Bradford, which grants the wishes of local families and individuals in need. The money came from vendor table rentals, event admission and raffle ticket sales – and exceeded our expectations, an amount well above our previous sales.

In addition to the cash, there were bags and bags of clothing items donated by the Moms at the end of the sale – and 101 donations of non-perishable food for the Helping Hand Food Bank.

We would like to thank the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury for generously donating the space for the sale, providing tables for the vendors, and allowing us easy access to the site for set-up and preparations. We would also like to express our appreciation to all of the amazing and supportive community businesses that graciously donated such wonderful prizes for the raffle: Sumayya Khan, The Salmon School of Fish, Kidergy, Zehrs, Poleiro, Amy Vee Photography, Summerlyn Dental, Bradford Orthodontics, Capelli Lounge, JR Watkins – Monique Justo, Rhonda's Cleaning Service, Smokin' Piggy, Smoochies Cakery, Treblemakers Academy of Music, Jamberry, Vinyl Obsessed, Lisa Pace Photography, Welcome Wagon – Bradford, Cilly Creations, Hafsah, Origami Owl, Emma's Sweets, DoTerra and Avon-Rhonda Jessop, Epicure, Characters, DriveTrue Mechanical, Dylan's Design Shoppe, Academy for Math and Learning, Scentsy, Don Cherry's Sports Grill, Lemar's Pizza and Be Well Chiropractic.

The sale was launched with a new Bradford Mom2Mom committee – chair Anna Cocco, Jenny DiPietro, Angela Bava, Liz Gorzo and Stephanie Irwin. Planning has already begun on the next fall sale in 2017; information will be available at bradfordmom2momsale.weebly, and on Facebook at BradfordMom2MomSale.

Bradford Mom2Mom Committee

Support Alzheimer Society at Christmas

To the editor: When the doctor first told my mom, "You have Alzheimer's disease," I was numb. There I was, only 30 years old with a newborn son and a mother whose memory was starting to fade. I Googled as much as I could about the disease; panic came the second I saw the words, "There is no cure."

I am sharing this with you because I want to see a world without Alzheimer's disease and other dementias. Please make a donation; your holiday gift to the Alzheimer Society of Simcoe County will help men and women in their community that face this devastation disease, by providing programs and services, and fund life-saving research focused on prevention, treatment and, ultimately, a cure.

This time of year is especially hard. I have such fond memories of our family's Christmas traditions – but all that has changed since Alzheimer's took hold of Mom 15 years ago. She is now in the late stages of the disease. She has forgotten how to walk and is confined to a wheelchair; she can't remember how to eat. Please donate now, at canadahelps.org/dn/2777.

Caron Leid, caregiver

Celebrating 80 years in the community

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

From right, Keffer congratulates Robson as Dykie Jr., Baynes (back) and Gunn look on. The hamlet of Bond Head had its "second traffic jam" ever on Dec. 3 – when guests passed through the main intersection on their way to The Club at Bond Head, and the 80th birthday party of Helen Robson (née Lloyd). Robson, surrounded by family members and friends, including her son, Bruce, daughter, Janet Gunn, and grandchildren, Kayla and Allyson, was presented with congratulations by BWG Mayor Rob Keffer and councillors Peter Dykie Jr., Gary Baynes and Ron Orr – and 80 beautiful roses, one for each year she has lived in Bradford West Gwillimbury.

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

The Goldenaires Choir entertains, singing the Reindeer Hula at the Danube Seniors Leisure Centre's Christmas dinner for members on Dec. 10.

December at the legion

The legion is here for Canada's vets. There is support available for veterans and their spouses, whether at home or in a nursing home or care facility. You don't have to be a legion member to ask for assistance. Contact veteran services officer Ron Harmer at 705-775-4919.

Friday Night Social. Every Friday at 6 p.m., drop by the Bradford legion, 115 Back St., for a meal, at a reasonable price, followed by entertainment. Dec. 16 is Pub Night, with a Christmas party theme. No cover charge.

The legion is definitely going "Down East" this December. On Dec. 17, the Ladies Auxiliary is hosting a ***Newfie Christmas Dance***, including a traditional jiggs dinner. Tickets are $20 per person for jiggs dinner at 6:30 p.m., live music at 8 p.m. For information, call 905-252-2852, or contact Marjorie at the legion at 905-775-5025. Tickets at the door.

And on New Year's Eve, Dec. 31, the Down East Girls host a ***New Year's Eve party***, with a roast beef dinner at 6:30 p.m., entertainment by The Cruisers, and a great celebration of the new year. $50 per person, or $80 per couple. For tickets, call Alice at 905-775-6245 or Dianne at 705-424-9378.

New Year's Levee. On Jan. 1, the president and executive of the Bradford legion Branch 521 extend new year's greetings to the community. Drop by the legion for light refreshments starting at 1 p.m. at the annual President's Levee.

Friday Night Karaoke on Jan. 6 features Jay's Karaoke Party at 8 p.m. No cover. All welcome.

For more information on events, programs and membership in the legion or the Ladies Auxiliary, or hall rentals, call Branch 521 at 905-775-5025.

Christmas at the Danube Centre

STAFF

The Danube Seniors Leisure Centre hosted its annual members-only Christmas dinner on Dec. 10, a catered turkey dinner with all the trimmings, plus entertainment and a sing-along with the Goldenaires Choir.

Among the guests were Bradford West Gwillimbury Mayor Rob Keffer and a special visitor from the North Pole, bringing Christmas greetings.

The Danube Centre is located at 715 Simcoe Rd. in Bradford. Most of the programs, activities and groups will be taking a break in December, until the new year. For more information, call 905-775-0612.

Coming up: The Danube Seniors Leisure Centre President's Levee takes place Jan. 1 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the centre. Drop in to welcome the new year with the president and executive of the centre, and enjoy refreshments, at no charge.

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Meetings & Announcements

Town Council

Members of the public are invited to attend all Council, Committee of the Whole and other Committee meetings. Meeting agendas and minutes are available at: bradfordwestgwillimbury.civicweb.net

For further information or to request a deputation, please contact the Clerk's Division at 905-775-5366.

Regular Meeting of Council & Committee of the Whole

- Tue. Dec. 20 @ 7:00 p.m. – BWG Library 425 Holland St. W – Zima Room

Board/Committee

Library Board

- Wed. Dec. 21 @ 7:00 p.m. – BWG Library 425 Holland St. W – Boardroom

Committee of Adjustment

- Wed. Dec. 21 @ 6:30 p.m. – BWG Library 425 Holland St. W – Zima Room

SUMMER Employment Opportunities

- **2017-PM01 – Parks Maintenance Staff**
- **2017-DC01 – Camp Counsellors**
- **2017-IF01 – Inclusion Facilitators**
- **2017-EA01 – Leisure Events & Marketing Assistant**

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Please visit www.townofbwg.com/careers or call 905-775-5366 for more information.

Celebrate!

CANADA 150

In 2017, Canada turns 150! The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury is excited to celebrate and looking for community input.

The Town is accepting submissions from the community for project ideas to contribute to the celebrations.

The submission form can be found at: *www.townofbwg.com/Canada150*

Please remember to place garbage and recycling at the end of your driveway, NOT on the road or on top of snowbanks, to keep bins from being knocked down by snowplows or passing vehicles.

OVERNIGHT WINTER PARKING RESTRICTIONS NOW IN EFFECT

NEW DATES!

On-street parking is prohibited from December 1 to April 1 of every year between the hours of 2:00-6:00 a.m.

Vehicles may not park overhanging any portion of the curb or sidewalk.

Violators may be ticketed or towed.

Town of BWG By-law 2014-91 as amended

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Events & Activities

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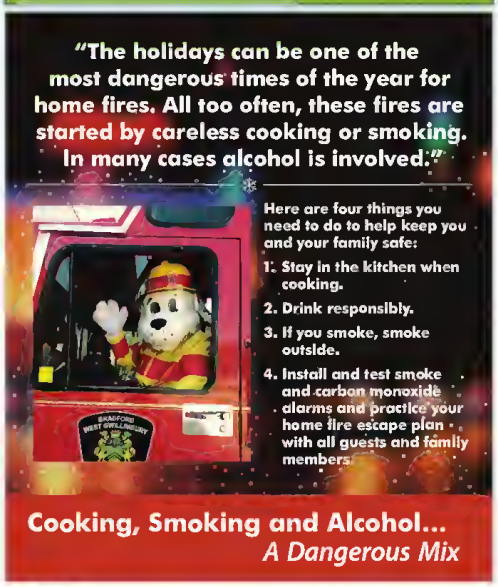


MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

South Simcoe Police Chief Rick Beazley, left, presents a badge to a new recruit, Const. Clint McLellan, in Innisfil on Dec. 12.

South Simcoe Police Chief Rick Beazley presents sergeant stripes to Const. Henry Geoffroy, promoted at the police services board meeting in Innisfil on Dec. 12.

New South Simcoe Police officers sworn in

MIRIAM KING
Bradford Times

The South Simcoe Police Service is on track for a $545,000 surplus by the end of 2016 – in part due to a strategy that curbs overtime, allows senior members to retire, and recruits cadets to fill the front-line ranks, starting at a lower pay scale.

On Dec. 12, the two newest recruits were sworn in and received their badges at the meeting of the Bradford West Gwillimbury-Innisfil Police Services Board.

Constables Clint McLellan and Devon Northrup recently completed their studies at the Ontario Police College, graduating with marks in the 90s. Sworn in by Justice J-J Douglas in front of an audience that included family members, the pair were welcomed to the service. They will receive an additional four weeks of in-service training, beginning Jan. 1, followed by four months of mentoring and on-the-job training "before we take the training wheels off," said Deputy Chief Andrew Fletcher.

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

From left, Justice J-J Douglas, new South Simcoe Police Const. Devon Northrup, Chief Rick Beazley and Const. Clint McLellan in Innisfil on Dec. 12.

The same meeting saw the promotion of Henry Geoffroy from constable to sergeant. Geoffroy, who has 18 years in policing, joined the South Simcoe Police in 2002 and has been active in training, emergency response and the marine unit, in addition to serving as the local police association president between 2006 and 2015. He will take on his expanded duties as sergeant on Jan. 1.

He received the congratulations of Chief Rick Beazley and members of the police services board, with board chair Rod Hicks commenting, "You're an honourable person, and I'm proud to know you."

"I'm looking forward to serving the communities of Bradford West Gwillimbury and Innisfil in my next level of service," said Geoffroy.

Meeting new rules on street checks

STAFF

The province's new legislation governing street checks – also known as "carding," the random stopping and questioning of citizens on the street – comes into effect on Jan. 1.

And while some police services are still struggling to train their members in the new rules, South Simcoe Police are prepared, Deputy Chief Andrew Fletcher told the Dec. 12 meeting of the police services board.

Members of the South Simcoe Police Service received training through the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police, and have since returned "and trained up everybody in a front-line capacity," including court officers, he said.

"We are just finalizing the last portion of our procedure," a template for the street checks, but should be ready for Jan. 1, Fletcher said. "We will be compliant with the legislation. We will be 100% compliant by the time the legislation comes down."

The legislation bans the "arbitrary and race-based collection of identifying information" by police, and sets new parameters for police-public interactions.

Police Briefs

Bradford man injured in collision

The York Regional Police Major Collision Investigation Unit is seeking witnesses after a serious collision in the Town of East Gwillimbury sent two people to hospital. At approximately 5 a.m. on Dec. 12, officers responded to a two-vehicle collision on Green Lane east of Yonge Street. A Honda Civic westbound on Green Lane collided with an eastbound Dodge Journey. The driver of the Honda, an 18-year-old Newmarket man, was transported to hospital with life-threatening injuries. The driver of the Dodge, a 56-year-old Bradford man, was taken to hospital with serious injuries. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Major Collision Investigation Unit at 866-876-5423, ext. 7704, or Crime Stoppers at 800-222-8477 to remain anonymous.

Fraud under $5,000

Innisfil – Around 1 p.m. on Dec. 10, police were called to a grocery store in Innisfil after a suspect attempted to use fraudulent credit cards to purchase store Visa gift cards. An employee recognized the man from previous fraudulent purchases at the same location, and an off-duty South Simcoe Police officer was able to arrest and hold the suspect, a 54-year-old King City man, until an on-duty officer arrived. Another four credit cards, not in the accused's name, were located in the man's vehicle. He was charged with fraud under $5,000 and breach of conditions not to possess any cards with a magnetic strip or chip unless they were lawfully issued in his name. He was held for a bail hearing.

Theft under $5,000

Innisfil – South Simcoe Police were called to a store at the Tanger Outlet Mall near Cookstown on Dec. 9 for the theft of a number of high-end sunglasses. Two females entered the store on Dec. 2, taking six or seven pairs of sunglasses without paying. Total loss is estimated at $2,800 to $3,000. Surveillance video captured images of the two women. Suspect 1 is black, with black hair, wearing a black leather jacket, black leather hat, black pants, black shoes and carrying a Tommy Hilfiger bag with white, blue and red stripes. Suspect 2 is black, with long black hair in a pony tail, long black coat, black tight pants and black Nike shoes with a white check. Anyone with information is asked to call South Simcoe Police at 905-775-3311 or 705-436-2141, or Crime Stoppers at 800-222-8477.

Snowmobiler over legal limit

Innisfil – On Dec. 9, just before 8 p.m., officers set up a RIDE checkpoint on Shoreacres Drive in Gilford and observed a lone snowmobile travelling at a high rate of speed on the road. The operator was not wearing a helmet. Officers stopped the 32-year-old Gilford man and determined he had been drinking. The man failed a roadside screening test and was arrested and returned to the station for further testing, which also registered a "fail." He was charged with having more than the legal amount of alcohol in his system and with not wearing a helmet under the Motorized Snow Vehicles Act. His snowmobile was impounded for seven days and his driver's licence was suspended for 90 days. Operating a snowmobile while under the influence of alcohol or drugs carries the same penalties as operating an automobile.

On Saturday night, a Bradford RIDE check stopped 550 vehicles and tested 32 drinking drivers. Two drivers received three-day suspensions for registering a "warn." Their vehicles were impounded, and they will face administrative fees to have their driving privileges reinstated.

Pharmacy robbery in Nobleton

A man wearing a Santa hat and white beard robbed a pharmacy in Nobleton on Dec. 7, York Regional Police say. At about 1:05 p.m., officers attended the pharmacy, located near King Road and Highway 27, and learned a lone male suspect entered via the rear door and went to the prescriptions counter. The man indicated he had a gun, and removed a quantity of prescription drugs before exiting the store. No one was injured. The suspect is described as male, white, with a natural dark beard, between the ages of 25 and 30, 5'8" and medium build. In addition to the Santa hat and beard, he was wearing a grey sweater with coloured stripes, green pants, gloves and construction-type boots. Anyone with information is asked to contact the York Regional Police Criminal Investigations Bureau at 866-876-5423 ext. 7241, or Crime Stoppers.

Violent robbery

Innisfil – A man walking east along Innisfil Beach Road near Jans Boulevard around midnight on Dec. 8 was attacked by two men. The assailants kicked and punched the victim, hitting him on the head several times with a tire iron before they took his wallet and cellphone. The men are described as white, in their 20s; one was wearing a red and white sweater. Anyone with information is asked to contact South Simcoe Police Const. Scaglione at 705-436-2141, ext. 1475, or Crime Stoppers.

Impaired in collision

Bradford – On Dec. 8 around 9:15 p.m., police were called to a two-car collision at Holland Street and Simcoe Road in Bradford. Investigating officers spoke with the drivers. A 25-year-old Beeton woman showed signs of impairment by alcohol; she was returned to the station for further testing, and subsequently charged with impaired driving. Her car was impounded and her licence was suspended for 90 days. The other driver was not injured.

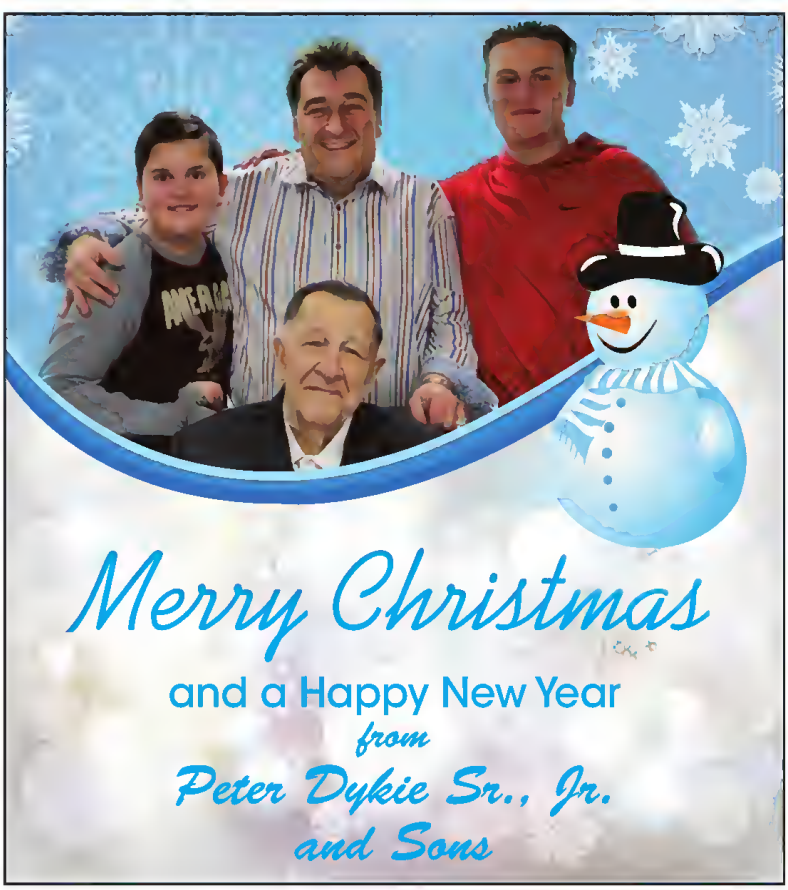
Break-and-enter

Bradford – Shortly after 10 a.m. on Dec. 7, South Simcoe Police were called to a Canal Road residence for a break-and-enter in progress. A man, known to the family, had arrived on their doorstep a few days earlier after an absence of several years. His presence was unwelcome and unwanted, and police were called, but the man left before officers arrived. He returned two days later, and once again left before police arrived. The suspect was contacted by phone and told not to return. On Wednesday morning, the man returned and this time used a crowbar to break into a basement apartment, where a female resident was asleep. Her brother came downstairs when she screamed, and held the intruder for police. A 25-year-old Brampton man was held in custody, charged with break-and-enter, possession of burglary tools and mischief under $5,000.

Industrial accident

PAUL NOVOSAD/SPECIAL TO THE BRADFORD TIMES

The Ministry of Labour was called to an industrial accident around 1 p.m. on Dec. 2 at the Trisan Construction site at Line 6 and 5 Sideroad in Bradford West Gwillimbury. A worker, identified as a 55-year-old Bradford man, was injured while working in a trench box. He was taken to hospital with unspecified injuries. The ministry ordered the immediate removal of any loose rocks and debris within the trench that might fall and injure workers, and returned on Dec. 8 to further inspect the site. No additional orders have been issued, but investigation is ongoing.



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Stuffing the fire truck at Zehrs

SUBMITTED

Firefighters are pictured at Zehrs on Dec. 10. Zehrs Market in Bradford has gone all out this year – organizing a toy drive for the Blue Door Shelter for homeless families, and for kids in care at Southlake Regional Health Centre; a food frive for both the Helping Hand Food Bank and Blue Door; and a Tree of Warmth, asking for donations of hats, mitts and scarves for those in need this holiday season. On Saturday, staff partnered with BWG Fire and Emergency Services in an effort to "Stuff a Fire Truck" with donations – and although firefighters were called away to respond to an emergency shortly after setting up in the parking lot, the toy and food drives have been a success. Zehrs staff alone contributed about $147 in cash, and customers brought in a small mountain of toys and purchased more than $1,665 of the $15 pre-filled bags of food, each containing breakfast and dinner for Christmas Day – generously sharing at Christmastime.

Handing over the key to the Tec-We-Gwill hall

MIRIAM KING
Bradford Times

Dec. 10 marked a milestone in the history of the Tec-We-Gwill Women's Institute and its hall in Newton Robinson: It was the day the Women's Institute celebrated handing over ownership of the hall to the Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury.

The building had its start as an Orange Hall, built in the mid-1930s. In the 1980s, the Orangemen signed over ownership to the Tec-We-Gwill Women's Institute for the sum of $1 – handing over both title and the responsibility for maintaining the community hall.

Ever since, the Women's Institute, which was founded in 1947, has worked with community partners like the Newton Robinson Boosters and Newtones choir to raise money for the hall's upkeep.

In April of 2015, town council agreed to take over the hall, to keep the doors of the community facility open. Working through the legalities has been a lengthy process, but now the transfer has been completed.

On Saturday, WI member Ellen Hickson described some of the history of the building – from the early days of huddling around an old box stove in the basement of the hall in 1949, to the addition of a elevator and wheelchair-accessible washroom, thanks to the fundraising efforts of the Boosters and Newtones, and a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation to the installation of a new kitchen in 2012.

She described dances and dinners held at the Tec-We-Gwill WI Hall – including a banquet for $1.70 a plate,in 1966 – and improvements to the furnace, carpet, water tank and stairs.

"These are just a few remembrances of our hall and what it has meant to our members," said an emotional Hickson. "We have had many wonderful meetings, concerts, showers, parties, presentations and many great functions for all to enjoy." She quoted from a poem, written to the hall: "It need not be a fancy hall to please our latest whim/ The plainest hall is beautiful, where our love dwells within."

Mayor Rob Keffer accepted a symbolic key from charter member Emlyn Westlake, noting, "This hall was a labour of love for the institute." Remembering "the good times and the memories," he promised, "That will continue."

"I look forward to seeing the hall continue," Deputy Mayor James Leduc told the members. "We're going to make sure the maintenance is kept up, take that burden off you."

The Tec-We-Gwill Women's Institute has about 39 members – the youngest in their 20s, the oldest in their 90s.

"A lot of our members have worked incredibly hard, and they are getting up there," said president Bonnie West. At the same time, the branch has continued to attract new members – in 2015, tying for the branch with the most new members.

The club has always spanned generations through its programs and workshops and will be celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2017 – the same year that marks the 120th anniversary of Women's Institutes.

Keffer and Coun. Ron Orr were both accompanied by their mothers at the luncheon and presentation beld at the Newton Robinson Hall. Both women are members of the Tec-We-Gwill WI.

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Emlyn Westlake, centre, charter member of the Tec-We-Gwill Women's Institute, hands over a symbolic key to the WI Hall to Bradford West Gwillimbury council, from left, councillors Peter Ferragine, Mark Contois, Deputy Mayor James Leduc, Mayor Rob Keffer, councillors Ron Orr, Raj Sandhu and Gary Baynes in Newton Robinson on Dec. 10.

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Christmas Nativity puppet show

Puppeteer Brenda Dainton holds a puppet show on the celebration of the Christmas Nativity, Dec. 18 at St. Catherine of Alexandria Catholic Church, 56 Hearn St. in Bond Head. A luncheon will be served at 12:30 p.m. The puppet show will begin promptly at 1:30 p.m. Free, but a donation for the lunch and puppet show will be welcomed. The afternoon is open to all. For more information, contact Dainton at 905-806-3588.

Calendars for Christmas

Celebrating 150 years

The Bond Head Women's Institute has taken a break from its series of calendars documenting the disappearing historic barns of Bradford West Gwillimbury, and for 2017 has come up with a unique tribute to Canada – just in time for the 150th anniversary of the country. The group held a contest, asking for submissions of key events and people who have shaped the nation. The result is a colourful, delightful and at times surprising calendar that makes a great gift or stocking stuffer, and a keepsake for the sesquicentennial. Calendars cost $20 each and are available at The Bradford Print Shoppe on Artesian Industrial Parkway, from any Women's Institute member or by calling Mikki at 905-775-4011, Leila at 905-775-6618 or Jan at 705-456-1870.

Rotary Cash Calendar

The 2017 Rotary Cash Calendar offers 365 chances to win cash prizes throughout the year. The calendar costs $20 and is now available from the Alzheimer Society of Simcoe County, which receives a $5 cash donation for every calendar sold. Makes a great gift or stocking stuffer. For information, email jfigliuzzi@alzheimersociety.ca or stop by the Barrie office at 20 Anne St. S.

Firefighters' Calendar

Help the Bradford firefighters support local charities, by picking up the 2017 Firefighters' Calendar at BWG Fire and Emergency Services headquarters on Melbourne Drive, 905-775-7311. Cost is $10. it is also available at various locations around town, including the Danube Seniors Leisure Centre on Simcoe Road. It's a stocking stuffer that helps the community.

Hannukah menorah lighting

Jewish Bradford is once again holding a public menorah-lighting ceremony for Hannnukah on Dec. 28 on the west lawn of the BWG Public Library at 7 p.m. The menorah lighting will be followed by a special program with arts and crafts for the kids, and refreshments, indoors in the library's Zima Room. Mayor Rob Keffer will bring greetings. The event is free. Note: Are you Jewish and need a menorah – the eight-branched candelabra that is part of Hannukah celebrations? Each night during the eight-day festival, another candle is added and lit, representing the miracle of the single pot of consecrated oil that burned for eight days after the Temple was liberated – just long enough for a fresh batch of consecrated oil to be prepared. For more information, contact Rabbi Yosef Nakkar at 647-458-8770.

Sounds of the season

Christmas blessings

Holy Martyrs of Japan Catholic Parish is planning an evening of blessings on Dec. 17, starting with the blessing of the church's Christmas tree at 6:30 p.m. and followed by Christmas music and carolling. All are welcome to come out to the church, 167 Essa St. in Bradford, for an evening of celebration through Christmas music. Refreshments will end the evening.

Christmas Express

The 50-member Huronia Symphony Orchestra and local youth choirs, from Alcona Glen and Lake Simcoe public schools, provide a musical journey through seasonal favourites from around the world, and a carol sing-along, on Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. at the Innisfil Community Church, 1571 Innisfil Beach Rd. Tickets are $25 for adults, $10 for seniors and students, $5 for children. For tickets, call 705-721-4752 or see huroniasymphony.ca.

Kleinburg Treble Makers

The Kleinburg Treble Makers, an a cappella women's ensemble, will share a Christmas and holiday program and sing-along at the Bradford United Church's Bradford Centre for the Arts, 66 Barrie St., on Dec. 18 at 3 p.m. Admission is $5, with the proceeds going to the BWG Community Initiative's Bradford Community Meal. The ensemble is well known in the area and has performed at the Ontario Vocal Festival's Jazz Festival, opening of the Vaughan Farmers' Market, Christmas in Kleinburg and many other venues.

Sir William Osler Christmas concert

SWOPS Christmas concert – Sir William Osler Public School in Bond Head presents a Christmas concert at 2 p.m. on Dec. 21. The school's two bands, made up of students in grades 5 through 8, will lead off the program with several exciting musical renditions, followed by presentations by every class. Come early to get a good seat. Located on County Road 88, just east of Bond Head.

An artisan's Christmas

Bradford held its own "one-of-a-kind" show at the Bradford Centre for the Arts (Bradford United Church). The Bond Head Fine Artists and friends offered shoppers an opportunity to enjoy tea and cookies, meet the artists and purchase unique, handcrafted gifts at an Artisan Christmas Show. From the whimsical creations of Pook Designz, to the hand-turned bowls and pepper mills of Bill Burlton, pottery by Erika Helman, and paintings by Coral Dryden, Meade Helman and Ingrid Schienke, hand-crafted jewelry and art photography, the show offered a range of arts and crafts at reasonable prices.

It was also a fundraiser for the BWG Community Initiatives and the weekly Bradford Community Meal. Admission was $2, with all proceeds going to the charity. Visitors could win a gift basket filled with items donated by the artists and artisans.

The Bond Head Fine Arts group started several years ago, when Helman, Dryden and Mary Artymko decided to work together, exchange ideas, encourage and support each other. The group meets every other Saturday morning, in Fall, Winter and Spring.

Currently, five artists belong; there have been as many as 10 members. The only requirements: an ability to compose and execute a painting or drawing, and to get along with others. Criticism is not permitted; positive feedback is.

Over the years, the group has sponsored 10 arts and craft shows.

"As any local artist will tell you, BWG is a tough art market. Hockey and soccer get a lot more attention than art," Helman said. "Every event we do we try to provide a space where people can relax, have a cup of tea, enjoy the art and talk with the artists. In our fast-paced computer-driven world, few folks really understand art or the creative process. We hope our events will give people a bit of insight and appreciation."

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Ingrid Schienke signs a painting at the Artisans' Christmas Show at the Bradford Centre for the Arts on Nov. 26.

For the love of Christmas

MIRIAM KING
Bradford Times

Michelle Zerafa's dad, Angelo, loved Christmas.

Back in his native Malta, he'd create elaborate nativity scenes and Christmas villages, building mountains and rivers out of papier maché.

When he moved to Canada, he continued the tradition – filling the front room of his home on Crown Crescent with a Christmas crèche and village, and decorating the front lawn, to the awe and delight of passersby.

Zerafa died more than two-and-a-half years ago, but the tradition has continued – carried on by his wife, Mary, and daughter, Michelle, the youngest of seven children.

"I start this right after Halloween," said Michelle, laying out a snowy village with scores of illuminated houses, museums, stores and even casinos. Some have moving parts: Skaters twirl and spin on a mirror lake, and a Polar Express train whistles its way around a circular track. The display fills the room, a tribute to her dad's ingenuity and creativity.

"Every year, he used to add, add, add," Michelle said. "He used to love doing this. This was his most enjoyable thing" – which is why she carries on the tradition.

Michelle hasn't learned how to make mountains out of papier macbé yet, but she's hoping to be able to pick up the skill in time for next year.

She has added a manikin, dressed in the Santa suit her dad used to wear at Christmas, overlooking the display – almost as if her dad was still overseeing the arrangement of the Christmas village. "I find when I'm doing this, it bonds me and Mom," Michelle said, and she hears "whispers from Dad" as to where she should place the lights and houses.

Neighbours, and sometimes passing motorists, catch glimpses of the display, stop and knock on the door, asking if they can take a look, and are often invited inside. It is, Mary said, a tribute to the memory of Angelo Zerafa.

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Mary Zerafa, left, and her youngest daughter, Michelle, carry on a family tradition, creating a Christmas village and nativity scene in their home in Bradford.

Entire room filled with a Christmas village and nativity scene at the Zerafa home in Bradford.

Share your memories

The Bradford Times is asking readers to share a favourite holiday memory – memories of Christmases past and present, memories of Hanukkah, stories of other cultural events, traditions and celebrations that bring together families and friends. Share your memories by dropping off stories to the office of the Bradford Times, 74 John St. W., or emailing mking@postmedia.com, subject "Christmas Memories," for publication in an upcoming edition of the Times.

Next year marks Canada's sesquicentennial. The Bradford Times is asking Canadians – both long-time residents and newcomers to the country – to share some of their favourite places, events and memories of this country we share. Stories, photos and comments can be sent to mking@postmedia.com, subject line "O Canada."

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Making 150 count at BDHS

BRADFORDTIMES.CA

MIRIAM KING
Bradford Times

RBC's #Make150Count campaign, celebrating Canada's 150th, throws out a challenge to Canadian youth: If you were given $150, no strings attached, what would you do to make a difference in your community? How would you make your $150 count?

Anna De Jong, a Grade 12 student at Bradford District High School (BDHS), took up the challenge. With the support of the BDHS student council, De Jong spearheaded a project to provide additional bike racks at her high school.

Not only was she successful in her application for $150 from RBC; she persuaded the school to partner on the project, authorizing the addition of 40 new bike rack spaces.

"Right now, we have people chaining their bikes to trees, to flagpoles," said principal Peter Stone, acknowledging the need. The RBC #Make150Count funding will help pay for new racks, supporting not only access to learning but the environment, he said.

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

From right, RBC's Wayne Brakeboer presents #Make150Count recipient Anna De Jong and principal Peter Stone with $150 in funding for new bike racks at Bradford District High School.

"It's like an investment in the future," said Wayne Brakeboer, RBC community market manager for Bradford, who presented the funds at BDHS on Dec. 12. The bike racks will continue to be used by students, long after De Jong has graduated and moved on to post-secondary education.

"It's nice because we get new bike racks, which we need," said De Jong, who has participated in other RBC youth programs, including the RBC-supported Student Life Network, a website and blog that offers students the opportunity to participate in daily challenges, win prizes and enter a draw for a $20,000 scholarship.

"The blog is really interesting. It has a lot of information about going off to first-year university, and away from home for the first time," said De Jong – information she will use as she applies to university for next year.

For more information on the RBC #Make150Count campaign, see rbc.com/make-150count.

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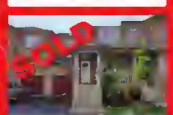

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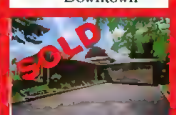

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Santa's Corner

Kids' Christmas Party at the PCCB

The Portuguese Cultural Centre of Bradford, 767 Simcoe Rd., hosts its annual Kids Christmas Party on Saturday, December 17, from 2 to 5 p.m. There will be arts and crafts, cookie-decorating, music and dancing, games, hot chocolate, hot dogs and treats – and a visit from Santa Claus. Every child will go home with a gift from Santa! Admission is free, although donations are welcomed. Please RSVP by December 14 to Cristina Perdiz, 905-252-1859 or *pccbradford@gmail.com* Gift donors and table sponsors welcomed.

Wanted: Volunteer Knitters

St. Catherine of Alexandria Catholic Church in Bond Head is looking for volunteer knitters to make children's hats, socks and mittens to decorate the church's Christmas Tree, before the items are donated to charity during the Christmas season. If you have the needles, wool and a big heart, this is an opportunity to "give back" to those in need. Knitted items can be dropped off at St. Catherine's, 56 Hearn St. in Bond Head on Sundays between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. For more information, or to arrange a different drop off time, please contact Donna at 905-775-6144.

Santa Claus Express

Ride the Santa Claus Express! The South Simcoe steam engine in Tottenham, is offering rides every weekend to December 17-18. Kids can enjoy a ride on the historic steam train, a chat with Santa, and a candy cane! Trains leave at 10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. For reservations or more information, see *www.southsimcoerailway.ca*.

Century 21 Toy Drive

Century 21 Heritage Group Realty, located at 49 Holland St. West, will be holding a Toy Drive, until December 20. Please drop of new, unwrapped toys for kids, at the Bradford office, for distribution to local families in need.

Christmas Food Drive

The Facebook group, We Grew Up or Live In Bradford West Gwillimbury, hosts its 5th Annual Holiday Food Drive, continuing to December 21. Drop off donations of non-perishable food to Times Designs, 157 Holland St. East, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday.

Decorator's Edge Toy Drive

Decorator's Edge Benjamin Moore Paints hosts its annual Toy Drive, 284 Holland St. West. Help fill the crib with toys, to give local kids in need a merrier Christmas.

Food Drive at the LCBO

The Bradford LCBO is holding its annual food drive, for the Helping Hand Food Bank. While shopping at the LCBO, why not drop off donations of unexpired, non-perishable food, to support those in need this Christmas?

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Santa meets Alexia, 8, at Bradford Family Dentistry, on Holland St. W. in Bradford, Ont. on Wednesday December 7, 2016. Santa wasn't handing out candy canes, but little presents!

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& A Prosperous New Year
To All My Friends & Clients
From Roger & Family
Prompt, Professional Service
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CALL ME ANYTIME
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905-775-5557 | rsilveira55@hotmail.com

Bond Head Lions' Craft Show

STAFF

More than 30 crafters and vendors packed the Bond Head Community Hall on Dec. 3 for the annual Bond Head Lions Craft Show and Sale.

It was a show that offered something for everyone – from home baking, to hand-knit and felted wool mittens, toy wooden trucks and cars, tea cup birdfeeders made from salvaged tea cups and collectibles – even chunks of Muskoka quartz that could contain gold ore. Books, turned wooden bowls, jewelry – it was an opportunity to pick up quality arts and crafts for Christmas gift giving and enjoy a hearty pancake and sausage breakfast, served by the Lions. The proceeds of the breakfast and table rentals support the Bond Head and District Lions Club's community projects.

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Tom McAllister made this working model of a P-16 Pacific "Fat Truck" from wood – on display at the Bond Head Lions Craft Show and Sale on Dec. 3.

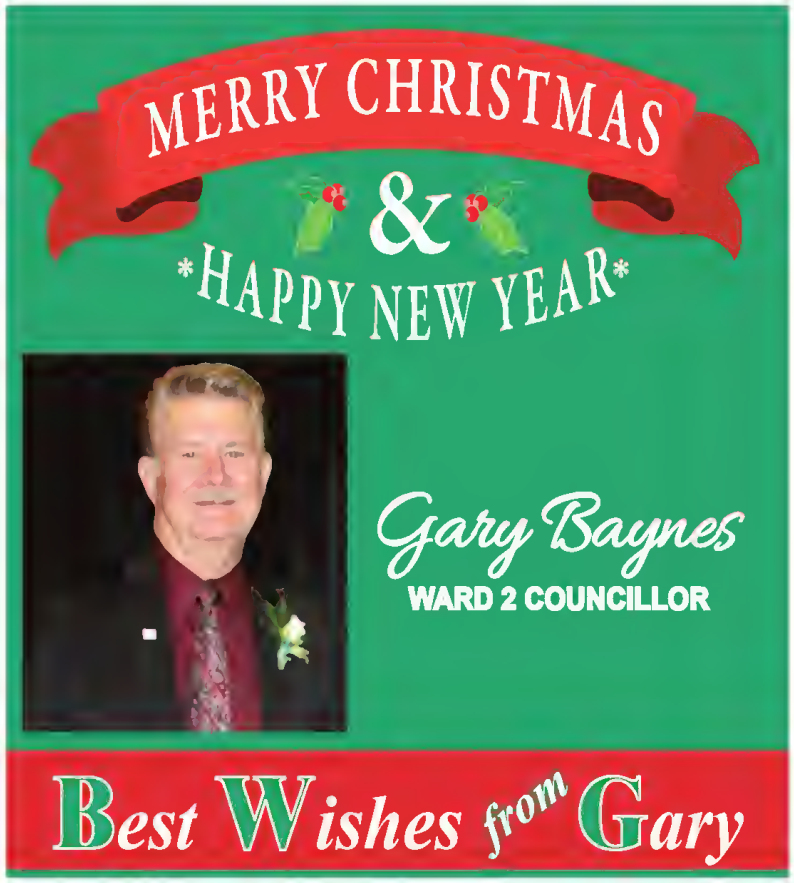
Dealing with stress

Nutritionist Gwen Cottingham, of Simply For Life, is offering a free workshop on dealing with holiday stress. One in a series of "Aspire Great Health" workshops, it will take place on Dec. 18 from 1 to 2 p.m. at the new Bradford Central Walk-in Clinic, 107 Holland St. E. All are welcome to attend and learn how to deal with the stress of the holidays, from food to emotions.

Bradford Spanish Church Christmas dinner

The Spanish Church of Bradford, which shares space with Green Valley Alliance Church at 758 Simcoe Rd., is hosting a Christmas dinner this Saturday, Dec. 17, starting at 6:30 p.m. The evening will feature delicious food, carollers, soloists and musical presentations, and gifts for the children – free. RSVP to 416-723-6670.

BRADFORDTIMES.CA



Pet photos with Santa

VICKY ZANATTA/ZWOMAN GRAPHICS AND PHOTOGRAPHY

It's become a beloved tradition at the Pet Valu store in Bradford: pet photos with Santa Claus. For a donation to the Lions International dog guide program, which provides seeing-eye, hearing-ear and other service dogs at no charge, shoppers could bring in their pets for a professional photograph by Vicky Zanatta of ZWoman Graphics and Photography. There were dozens of dogs, some dressed up for the occasion, a handful of cats and even two hamsters that came to the store to see Santa.

Merry Christmas

From my family to yours. Wishing everyone a Safe, Healthy & Happy New Year!

James Leduc
Deputy Mayor

Merry Christmas!

May the peace & joy of the holiday season be with you throughout the coming year

Mayor Rob Keffer and Family
rkeffer@townofbwg.com

HAVE A HAPPY HOLIDAY!

We're sending this little note your way,
To wish you a happy holiday
Filled with enough joy and cheer,
To last throughout the coming year
And to our customers and their kin,
Many thanks for dropping in!

From all of us at:
The Bradford Times

Town planning for future of recreation and leisure

MIRIAM KING
Bradford Times

The Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury has undertaken a new leisure services master plan study.

On Dec. 6, consultants with Monteith Brown Planning and Tucker Reid & Associates presented the draft master plan to council – to mixed response, as councillors suggested the study did not include a number of existing and potential recreational opportunities in the municipality.

The master plan makes 63 recommendations, shaping parks, recreation and leisure services planning and infrastructure in the municipality over the next 10 years.

It is one of the first in Ontario to be developed within the new "federal framework for recreation in Canada," Todd Brown, of Monteith Brown Planning, told council, a framework that identifies five pillars: active living; inclusion and accessibility; connecting people with nature; creating supportive environments; and building recreational capacity.

Brown described a public consultation process, that received 371 responses to an online survey, welcomed submissions from 29 stakeholder groups and hosted community visioning workshops. The result: The consultants found "great satisfaction" with the town's new library and leisure centre, but a need for greater flexibility in programming that would allow for more self-scheduled and drop-in activities, more programs directed toward persons with mobility issues, more programs reflective of the town's growing diversity, and more effort to overcome the financial barriers to participation.

"This is a bit of a commuter town. Not everyone can participate when they want, in what they want," noted consultant Anand Desai.

The plan encourages the town to promote active living by meeting the criteria for a "youth-friendly community," developing more programs for older adults and establishing a "report card" that would monitor health outcomes.

"The needs of a 55-plus, 70-year-old resident are very different from what they were in the past," said Desai, and require an update in the type of programming offered.

To improve inclusion and access, the plan recommends regular consultation with representatives of various agencies, and adjustments to offer sports and activities that especially address "marginalized" portions of the population – identified as women, the disabled, and low-income earners.

Under the "connecting people with nature" pillar, the consultants identified the town's 66 hectares of parkland and advised the town will require another 41 hectares as it grows. Among the recommendations: a total redesign of Centennial Park "to meet the needs of the established area of Bradford" as the new Henderson Park comes online. The consultants also recommended public education programs that would enhance environmental stewardship and the establishment of community gardens at Henderson Park.

Brown called "creating supportive environments" the "meat and potatoes" of the report – focusing on the town's facilities, and their adequacy, moving forward. The study determined the town's aquatics centre and three ice pads should be sufficient for the next 10 years, but there is a need to determine a future use for the old Bradford Community Centre, revitalize the existing skateboard park and redesign and possibly relocate the Centennial park ball diamonds.

In addition to the existing facilities, the master plan predicted a need for four additional soccer fields, two new ball diamonds (one with lighting, one without), a new community centre in Bond Head that could include a library, skate park, and splash pad to create a community hub – and pickleball/tennis courts.

Pickleball, a sport growing in popularity across North America, can be played on a modified tennis court. The consultants recommended painting pickleball lines on the courts at Lions Park and building a new facility at the Danube Seniors Leisure Centre.

Coun. Gary Lamb suggested the report should have included some private facilities that offer recreational options to the community, including the privately owned curling club, local golf courses and commercial fitness centres and gyms. "Once we lose something, we can't replace it," Lamb said, particularly concerned there is too much reliance on government to provide leisure services. "A huge portion of recreational activity in Ontario is private or not-for-profit."

"Certainly, your volunteer organizations continue to provide a tremendous service to the community," said Brown, adding the master plan was not proposing the town "unduly compete with them ... but be supportive of them."

"Foster a community development model," added Desai.

Coun. Mark Contois wondered why the consultants were talking about pickleball – "I never heard about that one sport," Contois said – and not low-cost options like Frisbee golf.

Brown replied the town's park plans already include "casual open space" where residents can "throw a Frisbee around," but that new pickleball leagues are attracting growing participation, particularly for those who are older, who have limited mobility. "We're trying to balance a number of different things and recreational options."

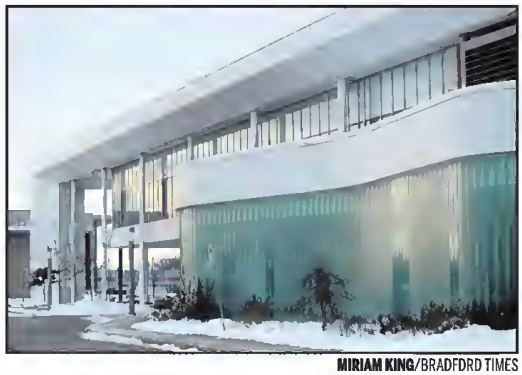
Coun. Gary Baynes suggested the trails at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area and a future trail along the new Holland Marsh canal berms should have been included, underlining "the link between recreation and tourism ... I think we should partner more." "It wasn't intentionally left out," replied Brown, reminding council the master plan is a living document that can be adjusted as needs arise. That came up again, when Coun. Raj Sandhu asked why no consideration was given to the internationally popular sport of cricket.

"We don't see that demand at the present time," said Brown. "The plan doesn't prevent that. It encourages groups to come forward and show a demand." He noted before the plan recommends investment of tax dollars in a recreational facility or program, "we want to make sure it's sustainable."

"Don't forget our old parks. Revitalize!" said Coun. Peter Dykie Jr. "We have to continue to improve these older parks," including Taylor Park, Lions Park and Luxury.

"That was a theme we heard through the consultation," agreed Brown, noting the town will need to plan for the revitalization and replacement of aging park infrastructure.

The plan can be viewed at townofbwg.com/lsmp. Comments are welcomed, and can be emailed to lsmp@townofbwg.com. The final report is expected early in 2017.



MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

A survey found residents are satisfied with their Bradford West Gwillimbury Leisure Centre.

Celebrate New Year's

STAFF

. ***The Downeast Girls host New Year's Eve*** at the Bradford legion on Dec. 31, with a roast beef dinner at 6:30, dance at 8 p.m. with The Cruisers, late-night snack and ringing in the new year. Tickets are $65 per person, $80 per couple. For tickets, call Alice at 905-775-6245 or Dianne at 705-424-9378.

. ***The Clube Portugues de Bradford presents a New Year's gala*** on Dec. 31, with entertainment by Banda Luso and a dinner that includes appetizers, spinach soup, sala, steak, chicken breast and shrimp, vegetables, rice and potatoes, dessert – plus a bottle of champagne per table, and a midnight buffet. For members, tickets are $85 for adults, $35 for children ages seven to 12, $15 for tots. Non-members pay $100 for adults, $45 for children seven to 12, $20 for tots. To order, contact Cristina Perdiz 905-252-1859 or 905-775-3254, Aldina Lapa at 905-775-4938 or any executive member at the Portuguese Cultural Centre of Bradford, 767 Simcoe Rd.

. Bradford Legion hosts a ***President's New Year's Levee*** on Sunday, January 1. Drop by the Legion, 115 Back St. in Bradford, for refreshments and a social afternoon starting at 1 p.m.

. The ***Danube Seniors Leisure Centre President's Levee*** takes place Sunday, January 1 from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Centre, 715 Simcoe Road in Bradford. Refreshments. No charge - drop in to welcome the New Year with the President and Executive of the Centre.

. ***BWG Mayor's New Year's Levee.*** Bradford West Gwillimbury Mayor Rob Keffer and members of Council invite the community to the BWG Leisure Centre, 471 West Park Avenue in Bradford, on Sunday, January 8, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. The event also launches the Town's celebration of Canada's 150th.

In the Christmas spirit at the library

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Holiday crafts, a concert by the Bradford Children's Choir, and the annual Christmas Fest at the Library recital by the Bradford School of Dance – the Free Family Saturday at the BWG Public Library on Dec. 3 had something for the whole family. In fact, the performance by dance students was standing room only in the Zima Room of the library, celebrating the season.

A final Christmas market

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Rob and Rosemary Radcliffe, of Lakeview Gardens, will bring fresh produce and home-made preserves to the final indoor Bradford Farmers' Market of the year – seen here at the library in Bradford on Nov. 12.

STAFF

The final indoor Bradford Farmers' Market of the year will take place Dec. 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the BWG Public Library – a Christmas market featuring crafters and artisans as well as the market's regular vendors.

Lakeview Gardens plans to bring an array of winter root vegetables and produce from its greenhouses, as well as jams and preserves. "It's been an excellent year," said the Gardens' Rob Radcliffe. "It's been successful coming indoors."

Barb Vaughan, of Bradford's Gluten Free Shoppe, will also be back for the final market, "with lots of different gluten-free treats," including "popcorn trees," decorated especially for Christmas. She is also taking orders for her famous Christmas trays – 60 pieces of gluten-free delight, for $50 – until Dec. 18.

Kim Mournahan, of Comolea Farms meats, is coming. "People seem to be appreciating our standards, being grass-fed," she said. "I like to think I have happy cows."

Springh Farms, Empire cheeses, Sheldon Creek Dairy products, Homestead eggs, The Polish Bakery with its handmade perogies, breads and bagels, and Laura Vree's Sweet Handmade cookies and stocking stuffers will also return - and then market will be done until Spring.

Come out, do some Christmas shopping - and share the spirit of the season with the vendors, at the Library, 425 Holland St. West in Bradford.

BRADFORDTIMES.CA

No cash for CarrotFest Friday

MIRIAM KING
Bradford Times

Bradford's CarrotFest, a festival that starts on a Friday evening in August and ends on the Saturday night, costs $50,000, plus $18,000 in in-kind donations. About $8,000 is generated by vendors' fees, $9,000 comes from the town, and the rest from various sponsorships, covering the cost of entertainment and street buskers.

An initial staff report on expanding CarrotFest to Sunday suggested the costs would double, to $100,000; with no guarantee of additional sponsorship, the town would need to provide at least another $35,000. The report also warned, "Adding Sunday to the event would have a large impact on the schedule of the staff involved, creating overtime as well as making it difficult to maintain the regular weekly operations."

Council, which had requested the report, rejected the idea of a Sunday extension. Instead, Deputy Mayor James Leduc proposed closing off Holland Street at noon on Friday to create a "Midnight Madness"-type street festival for downtown merchants and local entertainment, at "no cost" over and above what is already being spent.

On Nov. 1, a new report from staff suggested there would still be a cost – of nearly $15,000, if the streets were closed at noon, or $5,700 if the closure started at 6 p.m. Without full participation by downtown merchants, council was told, the town would need to step up with activities and entertainment, and at the moment there's no indication the 80% participation by merchants would be reached.

"As the report is currently written, I can't support it," said Coun. Raj Sandhu, questioning both cost and the timing. He pointed out most residents work outside Bradford and wouldn't be back to enjoy a festival that starts at noon on a Friday.

Coun. Gary Baynes also objected, calling on the town and staff to focus on the sesquicentennial celebration in 2017. "I'm in favour of status quo," he said. "We can do CarrotFest bigger and better in 2018."

Leduc continued to argue in favour of the Friday festival. "You've got to take a chance, put your toe in the water.

"I just think we need to do something for our downtown merchants. It doesn't have to be fancy."

"If we don't try, we don't know," agreed Coun. Peter Dykie Jr. "I'm sure some people are going to be upset," but there are already complaints from downtown merchants who say CarrotFest doesn't benefit them, he said. "Let's give it a try ... not leave it the same old, same old. We need to work with all the vendors and all the bars and all the restaurants."

Coun. Ron Orr suggested the downtown merchants should take the initiative – but the deputy mayor argued they were too busy. "Let staff do it," Leduc said, adding it would be "pretty easy" to fill the street, for example by inviting the Back Alley Cruisers Car club to hold a car show.

The issue came up again during budget talks on Nov. 29. This time, council was firm: No additional money will be allocated for CarrotFest, although there are plans to start the festival earlier, on Friday afternoon.

"It's a minor cost – road closures, police," said Leduc. "We can probably pull this off with sponsorships," and without adding to the budget, he said.

Coun. Mark Contois agreed. "It's more like a sidewalk sale – more to give (merchants) a head start on CarrotFest," suggesting the spaces could be filled with yard sales, local performers and artists, and "old cars" participating in a car show, at no added cost to the town.

Council also turned down a request for an additional position, in community services, that would work on events programming.

Come to the Bradford Farmers' Market Indoor Market!
Saturday December 17
10am - 2pm

Located in the Zima Room in the BWG Library & Cultural Center!

We will be there with all of your favourite vendors and delicious local foods.

See you at the Farmers' Market!

Bradford Farmers Market
425 Holland St. W.
Zima Room in the Bradford Public Library

Connect with us on social media for great recipe ideas, events and tips from our local vendors!

bradford times .ca
thebarrie examiner .com
innisfil examiner .ca
theenterprise bulletin .com
orilliapacket .com
frugal fridays
DECEMBER 16 - 8am
sunmediaauctions.com
Barrie & Area
Orillia & Area
Collingwood & Area

Battle of the Gwillimburies

STAFF

The fifth annual Battle of the Gwillimburies took place over the weekend at the BWG Leisure Centre, hosted by last year's winners, the Bradford Bulldogs.

The "battle" pits rep teams from Bradford West Gwillimbury against their counterparts from East Gwillimbury; at stake are bragging rights, a trophy and a wager between the mayors of the two communities.

East Gwillimbury Mayor Virginia Hackson and Coun. Joe Persechini joined Bradford West Gwillimbury Mayor Rob Keffer, Deputy Mayor James Leduc and councillors Gary Baynes, Raj Sandhu and Gary Lamb at centre ice on Dec. 10 for the opening ceremonies and puck drop, at the start of the novice A game.

And while the novice A Bulldogs handily won their match 2-0, as did the atom A, minor atom and midget A teams, East Gwillimbury dominated. The East Gwillimbury teams had arrived prepared and ready to do battle – all wearing T-shirts with the slogan, "We the East."

Noting that last year, Keffer presented Hackson with a Bulldogs jersey when BWG took the cup, East Gwillimbury Minor Hockey Association president Eric Kopsala said, "We will happily give back the jersey."

Just before the puck drop, Hackson promised, "I will provide a turkey if they win.

"I'm going to be giving them the turkey."

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

Bradford West Gwillimbury Mayor Rob Keffer and East Gwillimbury Mayor Virginia Hackson drop the puck, accompanied by East Gwillimbury Coun. Joe Persechini, Bradford West Gwillimbury Deputy Mayor James Leduc and councillors Raj Sandhu, Gary Baynes and Gary Lamb, and hockey association presidents, at the novice A game in the Battle of the Gwillimburies on Dec. 10.

By Sunday night, it was clear East Gwillimbury had taken back the trophy, leading 15-11 in points with only one game to go. According to the wager between the mayors, Bradford West Gwillimbury owes East Gwillimbury a lamb – and the promise the Battle of the Gwillimburies will continue next year.

Both East Gwillimbury and Bradford West Gwillimbury are named for Lady Gwillim, the wife of 18th-century lieutenant-governor John Graves Simcoe.

Kris Kringle Classic

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

The South Simcoe Basketball Club held its annual Kris Kringle Christmas Classic at the BWG Leisure Centre on Dec. 10, in Bradford, a celebration showcasing the under-14 girls and under-15 boys Sonics, while collecting food for the Helping Hand Food Bank just in time for Christmas. Special guest Kris Kringle, pictured with Sonic, helped cheer on the teams. Admission to the games was a donation of non-perishable food for the food bank. For more information about the South Simcoe Basketball Club, see ssbasketball.ca or SSBClub on Facebook.

Join the Christmas bird count

The Christmas Bird Count returns – a one-day bird census conducted by volunteers, between Dec. 14 and Jan. 5. For more information, visit Bird Studies Canada, at bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/cbc or Ontario Nature, ontarionature.org. The bird counts provide information that helps in monitoring the health of local bird populations, migration patterns, and the impact of climate change.

Last year, 3,427 people participated in 120 Christmas bird counts in Ontario alone – identifying nearly 1.6 million individual birds, belonging to 187 species. Among the biggest numbers: Canada goose (261,011), American crow (252,921) and European starling (132,769).

Unusual sightings included a vermilion flycatcher, at Wallacebird, a black-throated grey warbler in Pembroke and an American white pelican, way off course, in Belleville.

There will be a Christmas bird count in Bradford West Gwillimbury on Dec. 30. For more information or to participate, email bwgcbc@gmail.com.

Birds, agriculture search for common ground

GERALD MORRIS/SUBMITTED

Bobolink, a grassland species threatened by loss of habitat in Ontario.

Essa Twp. – On Nov. 22, farmers, community members and biologists gathered at the Tiffin Centre for Conservation to discuss the balance between grassland bird conservation, and farming.

Led by Bird Ecology and Conservation Ontario (BECO) in collaboration with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, the workshop focused on birds at risk in agricultural landscapes.

A large portion of southern Ontario is used for agriculture; these lands also provide essential habitat for birds like the bobolink, whose numbers are declining. The goal is to work with the agricultural community and other stakeholders, to gather the information that can help address the issues for farmland birds at risk.

The bobolink commonly nests on the ground in hayfields and pastures. Because of the overlap between nesting season and when producers need to cut their hay fields and graze their pastures, these birds – along with other grassland species – are often unsuccessful in raising young.

"We are thrilled to be working closely with producers who are creating the nesting habitat these birds depend upon, to learn more about how to support these species and the feasibility and challenges of potential conservation actions," said Zoe Lebrun-Southcott, executive director and wildlife biologist at BECO. "It's only by working together with the agricultural community that we'll be able to develop effective conservation and stewardship strategies for these species at risk."

The event was funded by a seed grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. For more information, see beco-birds.org.

BRADFORDTIMES.CA

Community Listings

THURS., DEC. 15

PROSTATE CANCER SUPPORT GROUP MEETS: The Newmarket group of the Prostate Cancer Canada Network meets at the Newmarket Seniors Meeting Place, 474 Davis Drive in Newmarket, 6:30 p.m. Informal Christmas get-together, with Dessert Potluck. For information see www.newmarketprostatecancer.com or call 905-895-1975.

SOUTH SIMCOE ARTS COUNCIL AGM: The South Simcoe Arts Council holds its Annual General Meeting at 7 p.m., in the 2nd Floor Boardroom, 39 Victoria St. E. in Alliston. Prior to the AGM, there will be a reception in the Gift Shop at 41 Victoria St. E., from 6 to 7 p.m. See southsimcoeartscouncil.com for details.

FRI., DEC. 16

OVER THE MOON HOUSE CONCERT: Innisfil Live Music Club, 2208 - 25 SR in Alcona, presents Over The Moon, a concert by the acoustic Roots duo Suzanne Levesque and husband Craig Bignell. Tickets are $25, available from Patty, at 705-431-7182. Doors open at 7 p.m., concert begins at 8 p.m. Coming up in January: EyeTunes Benefit Concert for CNIB.

SAT., DEC. 17

HURONIA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CHRISTMAS EXPRESS: Music from around the world and a Carol Sing, with Barrie's Huronia Symphony Orchestra, 7 p.m. at the Innisfil Community Church, 1571 Innisfil Beach Rd. Tickets are $25 adults, $10 Seniors/students, $5 children; available at www.huroniasymphony.ca or at Remax Chay Realty, 1070 Innisfil Beach Rd. (Crossroads Plaza), or 705-721-4752. The 50-member orchestra, under the direction of Oliver Balaburski, performs - with special guests the youth choirs of Alcona Glen PS and Lake Simcoe Elementary School.

KIDS CHRISTMAS PARTY: The Portuguese Cultural Centre of Bradford, 767 Simcoe Road, hosts a free party, 2 to 5 p.m. Entertainment, activities, crafts and a gift from Santa. Free, but donations welcomed. Please register by Dec. 14 RSVP by contacting Cristina Perdiz, 905-252-1859 or pccbradford@gmail.com.

EVENING OF BLESSINGS: Holy Martyrs of Japan Catholic Church in Bradford hosts an evening of blessings, starting with the Blessing of the Christmas tree, 6:30 p.m., followed by Christmas music and carolling. All welcome. Refreshments.

BRADFORD SPANISH CHURCH CHRISTMAS DINNER: Bradford's Spanish Church, at 758 Simcoe Rd., hosts a Christmas Dinner this Saturday, at 6:30 p.m. - delicious food, carollers, soloists and musical presentations, gifts for the kids, Free. RSVP to 416-723-6670.

SUN., DEC. 18

KLEINBURG TREBLE MAKERS HOLIDAY SING: The Kleinburg Treble Makers a cappella women's ensemble leads a holiday sing-along at the Bradford Centre for the Arts (Bradford United Church) 66 Barrie St. in Bradford, 3 p.m. Admission is $5, with proceeds going to the BWG Community Initiative's Bradford Community Meal.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AT ST. JOHN'S: St. John's Presbyterian Church hosts its annual Christmas Pageant, 11 a.m. at the Church at 10 SR and Line 8 BWG.

LESSONS & CAROLS: Trinity Anglican Church, 62 Church St. in Bradford, hosts Lessons & Carols, with favourite carols, scripture readings telling the Christmas story, and a presentation by the children. 7 p.m. at the church. All welcome.

CHRISTMAS NATIVITY PUPPET SHOW: Puppeteer Brenda Dainton presents a celebration of the Christmas Nativity, at St. Catherine of Alexandria Catholic Church, 56 Hearn St. in Bond Head. Luncheon will be served at 12:30 p.m. in the parish hall, the puppet show begins promptly at 1:30 p.m. Free, but donations for the lunch and puppet show will be welcomed.

ASPIRE GREAT HEALTH WORKSHOP: A free workshop on Dealing with Holiday Stress will be offered by nutritionist Gwen Cottingham at the Bradford Central Walk-in Clinic, 107 Holland St. East in Bradford, 1-2 p.m. All welcome.

TUES., DEC. 20

ALZHEIMER SUPPORT GROUP MEETS: The Alzheimer Support Group meets at CHATS, 448 Holland St. West in Bradford, 10 a.m. Family and friends caring for a person with Alzheimer's Disease or related dementia share coping strategies, challenges and successes in a safe place. For info, contact ASSC at 705-722-1066.

WANT YOUR EVENT INCLUDED?
SEND US YOUR INFO

Listings are published as space allows each week.
E-mail listings to **mking@postmedia.com**.
Deadline for inclusion in Thursday's paper is Tuesday at 10 a.m. Listings of 50 words or less must be sent as a text document or in the body of an e-mail.

Sinterklaas visits

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

In Dutch tradition, Sinterklaas (St. Nicholas) visits on Dec. 5 – wearing his red bishop's robe and mitre, and delivering gifts the day before St. Nicholas Day. Sinterklaas arrived at Dutch Treats in Bradford on Dec. 3, accompanied by helper Zwarte Pie, handing out treats to all the good little girls and boys, but carrying a bundle of switches in case any of the youngsters had been naughty. Yor-Simcoe MP Peter Van Loan visited the specialty store in Bradford, which offers an array of giftwares, gourmet foods and treats from the Netherlands, Belgium, Britain and Canada, plus an extensive deli counter. Van Loan chatted with Sinterklaas and checked out the bundle of switches. "I got this one year," Van Loan confided. "I got presents, too, but apparently I was bad enough to get a warning." Dad Ray and Rijker, four-and-a-half, are pictured with meet Sinterklaas.

Christmas Decorations
UP TO
40% OFF
Home hardware
30 DISSETTE ST. BRADFORD
905.775.6355
Open 7 days a week

PLACES OF WORSHIP

Springdale Christian Reformed Church
1466 Sideroad #5, Bradford.
905-775-3731
Sundays 10:00 a.m., 5:00 p.m.
Sunday School & Nursery
Pastor Paul VanStralen
www.springdalecrc.net

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
53 Miller Park Ave., Bradford
905-775-3412
Sunday Service:
10:00 a.m.

Bond Head United Church
Open Minds – Loving Hearts – Serving Hands
Come check us out
Sunday's at 10:30 am
4221 County Rd. 88
In the Hamlet of Bond Head
"And now I will show you a most excellent way – love." 1 Cor. 13

Holy Martyrs of Japan Catholic Church
167 Essa St. Bradford 905-775-2065
Masses
Sat 5:00 p.m., Sun. 8:30 a.m.,10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 6:30 p.m.
Confessions
1/2 hour before Sunday mass.

Trinity Anglican Church
62 Church St., Bradford
(Corner of Church & James St.)
Sunday Service, 10 am
Sunday School, 10 am
905-775-2200
trinityanglicanchurchbradford.com

Bradford United Church
66 Barrie St.,
905-775-7268
Service -10 am
Sunday School Available
www.bradfordunited.com

St. John's Presbyterian
2940 - 10th Sideroad
(8th Line & Middletown SR)
905-775-7274
Sunday Service 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School and Nursery provided.
stjohnspresbyterian.ca

Bradford Community Church
Mid-week small group
905-775-9268, located on the S.E. corner of Hwy #11 & Conc. #9
Sunday Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Nursery - Birth to 3 yrs Children 4-12 yrs

Bradford Islamic Community Centre Offer
Friday Prayer Service
- Time: 1:30 PM
- At Bradford Islamic Community Centre - (136 Holland St East # 8 Bradford L3Z 1G4)
- All brothers, sisters & kids are invited
- Please contact at bradfordislamiccentre@gmail.com for further details

Riverdrive Bible Chapel
905-836-1798
#20246 Bathurst (North of Hwy 11)
11:00 am - Family Bible Hour
1:00 pm Afternoon Service
7:30 pm Wed. - Prayer - Bible Study

St. Michael's Ukrainian
Orthodox Church
721 Simcoe Rd, Bradford
Bilingual Services
Liturgy Sunday & Feast
Days 10:00 am
Priest 905-715-0105

Greater Life Community Church
2940 Sideroad 10, Bradford
(Sideroad 10 & Line 8)
Sunday Worship 2:00 pm
Wednesday Bible Study 7:30 pm
(647)718-7849
www.greaterlifeonline.com

Holland Marsh Christian Reformed Church
18935 Dufferin St., R.R. #2 Newmarket
Sundays 10:00 am & 5:30 pm
Sunday School & Nursery with service
Mid-week youth & adult programs
Rev. Richard Bodini
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E: hollandmarshcrc@rogers.com

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This is the seventh year for the competition, formerly called the Staples Canada Recycle for Education Computer Lab Contest. Schools have until Jan. 31 to share the details of their programs and innovations.

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Obituaries

CONNOR, Edgar "Ed" Wallace - Peacefully passed away at home on Wednesday, December 7, 2016 at 77 years of age. Beloved husband of late Donna. Loving dad of Suzanne Cullen and Cheryl (Trevor) Nyers. Proud "Pappy" of Joshua, Andy; and Kyra. Dear brother of Darlene (Dave), late Wayne "Jake", and Jean (Dave). A private family service will be held. At the family's request to help those in need, donations may be made to CAMH Foundation - Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Foundation, Toronto. Arrangements entrusted to **SKWARCHUK FUNERAL HOME**, Bradford.

A tailored approach to learning, at the Oxford Learning Centre

MIRIAM KING
Bradford Times

The Oxford Learning Centre in Bradford opened its doors at 483 Holland St. West in June of this year.

"It's just been great, the response from the community," says owner Lisa Spagnuolo. Parents have responded to a tried-and-tested model that goes beyond tutoring, to focus on cognitive ability, and build confidence and skills.

"We're happy to help. That's what we're here for, to make that change in a child's life, and take that stress away from parents," Spagnuolo says.

The Oxford Learning Centre had its start in 1984. There are now 86 locations in Ontario alone, that provide not only tutoring in English, Math, French and Sciences, but Summer Learning programs, Enrichment, and ESL, for students from the age of 3 and up – including college and adult programs.

"We focus on the child as a whole. We look at their cognitive skills, as well as academics," Spagnuolo says, noting that each child is assessed and receives a program tailored specifically to their needs and abilities. "We want them to learn how to learn."

Classes are limited to 3 students per teacher, and kids usually attend twice a week, for 1 hour per class – although "they can come more often than that, if they want." And many do, a tribute to the effort to make learning not only stress-free, but fun.

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

From right, councillors Raj Sandhu and Peter Ferragine, MP Peter Van Loan, Coun. Gary Baynes (back), BWG Mayor Rob Keffer joining Santa Claus and owner Lisa Spagnuolo and supporters in cutting the ribbon at the officialgrand opening of the Oxford Learning Centre in Bradford on Dec. 10.

On December 10, Bradford's Oxford Learning Centre held its official Grand Opening and ribbon-cutting, paired with a Christmas party that offered a pancake breakfast, crafts and visit with Santa.

Among those congratulating Spagnuolo and her staff was MP for York-Simcoe Peter Van Loan, whose son John has attended the Summer Learning program. "It's been a very positive experience for the family," Van Loan said, thanking Spagnuolo for opening the first Oxford Learning Centre in the riding, and for providing "happy memories, and lives enriched."

"Education is so important, and to be able to have what you offer the community – to be tutored, and be able to learn," said BWG Mayor Rob Keffer, presenting congratulations from the Town.

Spagnuolo credited her staff and talented teachers for the Centre's success to date. "We've been able to serve so many children, and seen the results."

For more information, see *oxfordlearning.com/locations/tutor-bradford/* or call 905-775-3000.

Bringing European Style to Bradford

MIRIAM KING
Bradford Times

European Style Salon and Esthetics officially opened its doors at 21 Barrie St. on Dec. 3, offering hair and esthetic services in a setting tbat combines the modern with the traditional.

European Style Salon has preserved the wooden ceilings and beams that are part of the historic building, but has added ultra-modern work stations – all glass, chrome and shaped mirrors for a modern touch.

So, where does the "European" come in?

"It's where we were trained," said stylist Sally Brogegas, who lived in Portugal for 13 years, and who is delighted to bring European style – using "old school" round brushes, for example, instead of curling irons – to the multicultural community of Bradford.

European Style Salon and Esthetics offers manicures and pedicures, sculpted and gel nails, waxing, and all bair services, from cuts and blowdries to highlights. "We do everything," Brogegas said, including eyelash curling.

Joining ber at the salon is Addelina, who speaks Portuguese, Spanish and French in addition to English, and also trained in Europe.

"It really is great to see the amount of interest in opening businesses in Bradford," Mayor Rob Keffer said at the ribbon cutting, accompanied by Deputy Mayor James Leduc, councillors Ron Orr, Gary Baynes and Peter Dykie Jr., and members of the Bradford Board of Trade.

MIRIAM KING/BRADFORD TIMES

From left, Coun. Ron Orr, Mayor Rob Keffer, salon owner Sally Brogegas, Coun. Gary Baynes (back), Addelina and Coun. Peter Dykie Jr. at the grand opening of European Style Salon and Esthetics in Bradford on Dec. 3.

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